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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington, D. C.

Purposes of the April Survey of Farms and Farm Workers

1. Farm Employment

There are now two series of current estimates of farm employment. The one by the Bureau of the Census is based on monthly enumerations of individuals, classifying each worker according to his major activity during the specified week. The one by the BAE is based on monthly questionnaires to farmers, asking each to list the persons working on his farm for two days or more during the specified week.

There are some differences in coverage. The Census series excludes children under 14 - the BAE series includes them; the Census series does not count as employed in agriculture persons working primarily at a nonfarm job, but who also do some farm work - the BAE series includes them; the BAE series includes only persons working two days or more - the Census series has no lower limit on the number of hours necessary to qualify; the two are taken as of different periods of the month, which has some effect on the comparability of the figures; and there are some other minor differences in definition. Beyond that, however, the evidence which is accumulating shows that there is a very real difference in the definition and treatment of unpaid family workers. In that respect, apparently the differences in the employment figures reported by the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture in 1940 are being carried forward. A cooperative project between the two Bureaus is now underway to explore more fully the reasons for the differences in the two figures secured by the Census enumerators in 1940 through a matching of agriculture, population, and housing schedules taken in 1940.

Information is badly needed as a basis for estimating the size of the differences which are to be expected in the two current series as a result of the differences in approach and definition, and, also, to estimate the size and character of the other differences which may be present. Furthermore it is clear that the handling of unpaid family workers in the past has not been satisfactory. Therefore, a new approach to the problem of counting them is being devised as part of this survey. In developing that part of the schedule which deals with farm employment, a major objective was to provide enough information so that the groups which are being treated differently in the series now available can be identified and counted.

As part of the effort to throw further light on what is and what is not included in current estimates of agricultural employment, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics is adding some supplementary questions to its April 1 mailed inquiry. One of these questions is to provide information on the number of persons reported by farmers as working on the farms who are under 14 years of age. The BAE series does not specify a lower age limit, whereas the Census labor force estimates are confined to persons 14 and over. A second question in the supplement attempts to determine the extent of dual

employment by asking the respondents to indicate how many of the persons working on his farm during the reporting week were also working on some other farm as operator or paid worker and how many were also doing nonfarm work during the reporting week. The number working 2 days or more and also attending school will also be secured. The number of persons working fewer than 2 days per week, and, therefore, not included in the BAE series, is the objective of a third question on the supplemental schedule.

2. Current Estimates

In addition to the data on farm labor and farm population, a number of agricultural items will be secured and estimates of change since 1940 will be made as a result of this enumeration. Since number of farms is a basic figure in numerous computations, it is highly desirable that a figure reflecting changes in the number of farms since 1940 become available. The estimate of the number of farms will be such that a breakdown by certain farm characteristics can be made, providing an opportunity for analysis of the nature of the changes that have taken place since 1940. Changes in tenure and in the proportions of sharecroppers, other tenants, and owners are also to be reported. Total farm acreage, value of land and buildings, total acreage in harvested crops, and acreage in the major crops are to be secured. A new question to provide badly needed information asks for the area in the farm garden and gives the respondent the choice of reporting in acres or in square feet.

Two questions on gross value of farm products, one on products sold or to be sold, or traded; - the other on products used by the farm households, will provide a basis for a frequency table showing distribution of gross farm income in 1943. Because of the rapid changes in farm income since 1940, the distributions given by the 1940 Census in many instances are now out of date.

Estimates will also be secured for the number of chickens, cows and heifers kept mainly for milk, automobiles, motor trucks, tractors, and whether or not the farm operator's dwelling is lighted by electricity. Electric motors for farm use is a new item in the farm machinery list.

To provide information on the rapidly changing farm indebtedness situation, two questions on mortgage debt are included: One on whether or not the owner-operated farm has a mortgage; the other on the present rate of interest on the first mortgage. Both questions will provide data comparable with that secured in 1940.

3. Field Test of New Questions

In connection with the enumeration of unpaid family workers, an attempt is to be made to objectify the whole approach in terms of hours of work and a more specific statement of kinds of work to be included or excluded. In that connection also an effort is to be made to arrive at the extent of dual employment in agriculture; that is, persons working on more than one farm during the specified week end, and, therefore, counted more than once when the reports from farm operators are added together. For purposes of computing

data on farm incomes and per capita income of the farm population, it is desired to get not only the days worked off the farm by the farm operator, but also data on the extent of nonfarm work by other members of the operators family. This has been proposed for the 1945 schedule and is to be tried in this enumeration. Similarly, a question on the area in farm gardens and a question on the number of electric motors which have been proposed for the 1945 schedule are to be tried as part of this enumeration.

4. Master Sample

One of the major results to be expected from this survey is a field test of the usefulness of the Master Sample for sample enumerations. It is planned now that as part of the 1945 Census of Agriculture, supplemental schedules are to be taken from the farms located within the Master Sample areas. All farms within those areas are to be identified on the schedules so that these farms may be used as a sample in order to provide certain tabulations more rapidly than would be possible without sampling and also to provide a basis for certain additional tabulations and cross-tabulations which may be desired. This will be the first field test under similar conditions for the Master Sample in all parts of the country. It should provide useful information not only for the 1945 Census of Agriculture but for sample enumerations which may be developed by the BAE.

The counties in which sample areas have been selected for this work are:

Alabama - Chilton
Jefferson *
Perry
Wilcox *

Connecticut - Hartford
Tolland
District of Columbia

Arkansas - Garland
Hot Springs
Jefferson
Pope *
Union

Florida - Duval *
Manatee
Nassau *
Sarasota

California - Alameda
Los Angeles
Sacramento
San Francisco
Sonoma *

Georgia - Blackley
DeKalb
Fulton
Harris *
Lowndes *
Muscogee *
Rockdale
Twiggs

Colorado - Boulder
Conejos *
Gilpin
Rio Grande *

Idaho - Canyon
Gem
Payette

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|---------------|---|---|----------------|---|--|
| Illinois | - | Cook East St. Louis Pike Scott Tazewell * | Minnesota | - | Crow Wing Le Sueur * Nicollet * Wilkins * |
| Indiana | - | Adams Allen Greene * Pulaski * | Mississippi | - | Coahoma Harrison Quitman Stone |
| Iowa | - | Delaware Dubuque Jefferson * Pottawattamie * Woodbury * | Missouri | - | Bollinger Greene Madison Polk Oregon * St. Louis City St. Louis County |
| Kansas | - | Leavenworth Riley * Wyandotte | Montana | - | Dawson |
| Kentucky | - | Ballard Boyle * Christian McCracken Todd | Nebraska | - | Cumming Dodge |
| Louisiana | - | Catahoula * Iberia St. Martin | New Hampshire | - | Belknap * |
| Maine | - | York | New Jersey | - | Cape May * Cumberland * Essex-Hudson Hunterdon Warren |
| Maryland | - | Baltimore City Baltimore County Montgomery | New Mexico | - | Chavez |
| Massachusetts | - | Middlesex Norfolk Suffolk | New York | - | Erie Monroe New York City Orange Rockland Wayne Westchester |
| Michigan | - | Antrim Calhoun Charlevoix Eaton Tuscola * Wayne | North Carolina | - | Buncombe Hertford * Madison |
| | | | North Dakota | - | Cass McIntosh * |

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| Ohio | - Butler Cuyahoga Meigs *Pickaway Preble Ross Scioto Wayne * | Texas | - Atascosa Austin * Camp Irion * Jefferson Orange Tarrant Tom Green * Upshur |
| Oklahoma | - Creek * LeFlore * Woodward | Utah | - Davis Salt Lake |
| Oregon | - Union | Vermont | - Orange |
| Pennsylvania | - Allegheny Indiana * Lancaster Philadelphia | Virginia | - Alexandria City Arlington Norfolk Princess Anne Spotsylvania * |
| Rhode Island | - Providence | Washington | - King Lewis * |
| South Carolina | - Greenwood McCormick Oconee * York * | West Virginia | - McDowell Wyoming |
| Tennessee | - Sullivan Sumner * Unicoi Washington | Wisconsin | - Barron * Fond du Lac Milwaukee Sheboygan Waukesha |

Those not marked "*" comprise the regular sample for Census monthly report on the labor force. Special farm and ranch schedules to be taken from farm operators.

Those marked "*" are rural counties selected as an additional sample especially for this project.

